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NATURAL SETTING

Pocahontas County owes its early development largely to its position on the boundary of Virginia. Pioneering explorers discovered its rich valleys on their first short trips beyond the Allegheny barrier. Later, it became an important gateway for settlers from the eastern communities who pushed into the free lands of the Ohio country. The county, in its geographical placement and contour, is quite similar to West Virginia, itself. Trim the northern panhandle region from a map of state and the remainder will be surprisingly like a map of Pocahontas. Like the state, the county extends much farther north, south, east, and west than its size would indicate. From 37 degrees, 40 minutes north latitude at its southernmost point it stretches to 38 degrees 45 minutes north latitude. Similarly it reaches from 79 degrees, 35 minutes to 80 degrees, 24 minutes west longitude.

Its more than 900 square miles of land make Pocahontas the third county of the state in size. It was formed from parts of Bath, Pendleton, and Randolph counties and was originally thought to contain 820 square miles. Boundaries, as determined by the Virginia legislature in 1821, were as follows:

"Beginning at the line of Greenbrier County on top of the Alleghany Mountain Thence with the said line to the head of Spice Run, thence with the said line to the end of the Droop Mountain, thence with said line to Fryers Knob, thence with said line to where it intersects the line of Bath and Randolph, thence with the line dividing Randolph and Greenbrier Counties, to the mountain opposite the junction of the Hannock Shoal Run with Williams River, thence a straight line to the south of the dry fork of Elk River, Thence a straight line to the top of the mountain between the head of the Valley River, and the point

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The straight line from the Slavens road to the mountain opposite the head of East Fork of Greenbrier caused much confusion. As county lines were then, a corridor was formed cutting off a part of Pendleton from the main body of the county. Also, a "no man's land" was created adjacent to Randolph. After considerable dispute the boundaries were moved to the present location. Pocahontas thus gained a vast area of rich timber land. Burner, May, Gertrude and Wildell are lumber towns which sprang up in this formerly disputed territory. About ten miles of the Western Maryland Railroad together with attending operations is in the area. A few years later the southern border was changed slightly, giving the county its present area of 602,880 acres. As in the case of most land where rough terrain is general, boundaries were determined largely by natural barriers, streams, and divisions of water shed. The unfamiliarity of many an early surveyor with the wild country in which he worked forced him to rely upon prominent landmarks for his bearings. However, since political and social groupsng were also influenced greatly by topographical situation it appears logical that the system is far more just than the arbitrary laying-off of orderly rows of townships and counties.

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CHAPTER THREE - NATURAL SETTING (Pocahontas County)

Beginning August 26th 1940

Roscoe W. Brown.

Part 1.

Sec A. Pocahontas County is situated on the eastern side of the State somewhat below the center of West Virginia, is adjoining the State of Virginia in the east, the meanders of the Alleghany mountains, and the watershed thereof which is the line between Virginia and West Virginia, forms the eastern boundry line of Pocahontas County except the north end of the County which is bounded on the east by Pendleton County of West Virginia.

Pocahontas County is bounded on the north and north-west by Webster and Randolph Counties, on the north-east by Pendleton County, on the east by Highland and Bath Counties of the State of Virginia, and on the south-west by Greenbrier County.

The Geographal position of Pocahontas County, or as it is oriented in the State of West Virginia, in reference to its position of Latitude and Longitudinal departure; at the High-School Building at Greenbank taken as a point as near as can be defined, is 38 degrees, 25 minutes, and 33 seconds of North Latitude, and 79 degrees, 49 minutes, and 30 seconds of Longitude from Greenwich.

The Geographal Position of Marlinton (the County seat of Pocahontas County) is approximately as taken from the Topographical Maps made by U.S.Engineers for the Geological Surveys, is 38 degrees and 13 minutes of North Latitude, and 80 degrees and 6 minutes of Longitude.

In reference to the Magnetic declination, or the delination of the magnetic compass needle, from the true North Meridian appears to be 4 degrees and 30 minutes of West Declination, with an annual change of 3 minutes per year.

(All the U.S. Government surveys are based on the True North Meridian, all the local and private lands are surveyed by the Magnetic Meridian.)

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The County is irregular in outline , and has no definite form , Its greatest maximum length is nearly 60 miles running in a northeast-southwest direction and its greatest width in a northwest and southeast direction is approximately 29 miles narrowing to about 12miles toward the northern end.

The present area of Pocahontas County, as determined with planimeter from the topographic sheets of the United State Geological Survey as follows:

Greenbank District ----- 319.24 Square Miles.

Hunters ville District----- 193.64 Square Miles.

Edray District----- 237.05 Square Miles.

Little Levels District--- 192.68 Square Miles.

Total---------- 942.61 Square Miles . or about 602.880 acres more or less .

Pochontas County was formed by an act of the Virginia Legislature in Dec -ember 1821, while West Virginia was a part of the State of Virginia.

It was formed from parts of Bath, Pendleton , and Randolph Counties , and that time was supposed to contain 820 square miles.

The boundry lines of Pocahontas County as origionally established by the Virginia Legislature in December 1821 are as follows .

Beginning at the line of Greenbrier County on top of the Allegheny Mountain Thence with the said line to the head of Spice Run, thence with the said line to the end of the Droop Mountain, thence with said line to Fryers Knob, thence with said line to where it intersects the line of Bath and Randolph, thence with the line dividing Randolph and Greenbrier Counties , to the mountain opposite the junction of the Bannock Shoal Run with Williams River, thence a straight line to the mouth of the dry fork of ElkRiver, Thence a straight line to the top of the mountain between the head of the Valley River, and the point last aforesaid, where the road leading from Clover Lick to Randolph courthouse, crosses said mountain , thence a straight line to where the line of Pendleton County intersects the line of Bath and Randolph Counties on top of the mountain

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It appears that the establishment of the straight line from the point in the road leading from Slaven,s to the Randolph County Court house to the top of the Alleghany Mountain opposite the head of the East Fork of the Greenbrier River in later years,led to much misunderstanding ,and controversy between the Counties Pocahontas and Randolph. . Randolph County was formed from Harrison County by an Act of the Virginia Assembly in October 1786 , and did,nt include the head waters of the West Fork of the Greenbrier River; and it appeared that the said line would would cut a part of Pendleton in two parts not joining. Pendleton County line as established by the Virginia Assembly in December 1787 ,only called for the top of the Alleghany and along the same ,and the east side of the Greenbrier waters to the south-west fountain of the South Branch, this point was the corner of Augusta County at that time and later formed the setting of the Bath County line as formed from Augusta County in 1791

After the formation of Pocahontas County in 1821 ,the greater portion of the area drained by the waters of the West Fork of the Greenbrier River was not completely included in the County lines above mentioned and therefore appeared to be " No Mans Land" and was all due to the fact that the origional calls show a misunderstanding on the part of the draftsman of the bill ,as to the topographical situation of the country.

It was agreed toand understood by the officials of Pocahontas and Randolph Counties that a definite line must be established between the two Counties at this particular point of controversy.

The service of B.M.Yeager a qualified land surveyor was secured to survey and establish a line as directed by a board of commissioners; The survey notes of B.M.Yeager bearing date of May 22nd 1876 purports the fact that he began at the top of Back Alleghany , on Shavers Mountain ,where the Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike road crosses the top of said Mountain ; (This point had been the most northern point or corner of Pocahontas County for a period of 55 years).
thence with the top of said montain on the divide between the waters of the Grenbrier River ,and the waters of the Shavers Fork of Cheat River , and following the water shed of the Greenbrier waters to a point onthe top of the Alleghany Mountain on the Pendleton County line .

The said surveyor gives the whole distance 8415 poles--- $42.07½

Reversed ---------- 7276 poles $ 36.38

Number of courses--------- 146 ------- 4.56

The whole distance of the new line between Randolph and Pocahontas County is about 27 miles. (The bearings and distanc,s of the courses are omitted at this place)

The following is the Commissioners report of the line ,and the same is a matter of record in the County Clerks Office of Pocahontas County West Va. In Deed Book No 15 at Page 188

We Sherman H. Clark ,William O. Overholt, and John C. Price Commissioners on the part of Pocahontas County and,

B.W.Crawford, Nicholas Marstiller , and S.D. Strader Commissioners ,on behalf of Randolph County , and B. W. Byrne who was dully chose Umpire by said Commissioners, who were appointed according to law, to ascertain and fix that part of the County line between the said Counties about which there has been a controversy between said Counties . Met in the vicinityof said disputed line on the 17th day of August 1880 . and first dully sworn ; on hearing evidence and Argument of counsel. The said Sherman H. Clark, William O. Overholt and J.C. Price ,and B.W.Byrne , a majority of said board of Commissioners, ascertain add fix the line in controversy as follows, as shown in the plat accompaning this report

- to wit beginning on the tpp of Back Alleghany , onShavers Mountain , where the Staunton add Parkersburg Turnpike road crosses the top of said Mountain and running thence with the top of said Mountain on the divide, between the waters of Greenbrier River and the waters of Shavers Fork of Cheat River as follows . (the first call of the line) S.33 E. 58 poles . ------ (The bearings and distances of the courses of the line are ommitted at this place , but can furnish them if necesary ,) (The last call or line) N. 37 E. 70 poles to a Hemlock , Cherry and 2 Beeches on the top of Alleghany Mountain . where the said dividing ridge intersects the said Alleghany Mountain.

The Commissioners on the part of Randolph County dissenting .

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August 24th 1882

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TEST JOHN J.BEARD CLERK.

The establishment of the disputed line by the Commissioners , which appears to have been controlled by the deciding vote of the Umpire added much valuation to the Greenbank District of Pocahohtas County; The valuation of many thousand acres of valuable timber fell to Pocahontas County , and many years afterward many different Band Saw mills and Lumber Towns were established within the disputed area , The Lumber Towns- Burner, May, Gertrude , and Wildell, and other lumber operations on the Western Maryland Railroad were in the area that was ceded to Pocahontas County. These were all large Lumber towns with Churches and Schools , and had all the modern conveniencies ,that went to make up a desirable place for the employees, and their families to live, while the mills were in operation . The duration of the mills that operated on the West Fork of the Greenbrier River was from 1900 to about 1920.

About 10 miles of the Western Maryland Railroad is within this disputed area , and adding that amount of valuation of the rolling stock to Pocahontas County.

In the early days of Pocahontas County Agriculture was the chief pursuit of the early settlers . Because travel was difficult and transportation facilities were meager, the settlers were compelled to be self- supporting or self- sustainning

The coming of the Greenbrier Division of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway running through Pocahontas County, and connecting with the Western Maryland Railway at Durbin , and the hard surfaced roads that pass through Pocahontas County, with all its rock based secondary roads , has made ingress and egress , free and facilitative for economic and social science of the business men of the adjoining Counties of West Virginia; The establishment of the County lines have brought about no restriction of trade relations between the Counties that have common lines with Pocahonta County. Highland , and Bath, Counties of the State of Virginia are contguous or border Counties , but trade relations exist between the above named bordering Counties of Virginia , with the same degree of Social Economy · as with Greenbrier , Webster, Randalph and Pendleton Counties of West Virginia;

However , the trade relations between Pocahontas County and the bordering Counties of Virginia are subject to the State laws of each State , and each adjoining bordering County , in trade relations , observe the civil laws of their neighbor States.

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CHAPTER THREE . NATURAL SETTING, Pocahontas County Oct 7th- 1940

Roscoe W. Brown.

Part 1)

(Sec C) The Mountains that divide the waters of the Greenbrier river and the waters of the Deer creek and thw Brush run is known as the Little Mountain, which was formerly called Gallaghers Ridge in honor of Charles Gallagher whos patent of 32,000 acres covered the greater part of the ridge, It was later called "Brush - ridge" after a man by the name of "Brush" an assignee of Charles Gallagher and is where we get the name of " Brush RUn."

The Little Mountain extends from from the County road at Cass , at the junction of the Deer Creek and the Greenbrier river , to a point on or near the Staunton and Parkerburg Pike between the Kelly Spring ,which is the head of Brush run and at a place known as the " Slab Camp " and the Spring on the Lunsford place now owned by James Wilfong , which is the head of Deer Creek .; At this point it connects with the Frank Mountain , and forms a spur of the main Allegheny - Mountain and has an elevation of 3695 feet.

The Frank Mountain and the Buffalo Ridge unite at this point known as the Top Allegheny " and at an elevation of 4 199 feet (This point is also known as the Top Allegheny Battle Field) .

The Buffalo Ridge divides the waters of the North Fork of Deer Creek and Deer Creek proper and has an elevation of 4 000 feet .

Lying between the Allegheny Mountains and the Back Allegheny Mountain are a number of ranges of considerable prominence , Beaverlick Mountain enters from Greenbrier County with its extension in Brushy Mountain , North of which are Browns Mountain , Michael Mountain and other small ranges which terminate , in a wide level valley north of Greenbank This series (Geologically speaking) of ranges makes one large fold composed of several small folds the back bone of which is the White Medina Quartzite , it rises in a cliff to 3,652. feet

Just East of the Greenbrier river lies a series of even crested short ranges seperated by gaps of greater or less depths.

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The Frank Mountain and the Buffalo Ridge unite at this point known as the Top Allegheny " and at an elevation of 4 199 feet (This point is also known as the Top Allegheny Battle Field) .

The Buffalo Ridge divides the waters of the North Fork of Deer Creek and Deer Creek proper and has an elevation of 4 000 feet .

Lying between the Allegheny Mountains and the Back Allegheny Mountain are a number of ranges of considerable prominence , Beaverlick Mountain enters from Greenbrier County with its extension in Brushy Mountain , North of which are Browns Mountain , Michael Mountain and other small ranges which terminate , in a wide level valley north of Greenbank This series (Geologically speaking) of ranges makes one large fold composed of several small folds the back bone of which is the White Medina Quartzite , it rises in a cliff to 3,652. feet

Just East of the Greenbrier river lies a series of even crested short ranges separated by gaps of greater or less depths.

The County is irregular in outline , and has no definite form , Its greatest maximum length is nearly 60 miles running in a northeast-southwest direction and its greatest width in a northwest and southeast direction is approximately 29 miles narrowing to about 12miles toward the northern end.

The present area of Pocahontas County, as determined with planimeter from the topographic sheets of the United State Geological Survey as follows:

Greenbank District ----- 319.24 Square Miles.

Huntersville District----- 193.64 Square Miles.

Edray District----- 237.05 Square Miles.

Little Levels District--- 192.68 Square Miles.

Total---------- 942.61 Square Miles . or about 602.880 acres more or less .

Pochontas County was formed by an act of the Virginia Legislature in Dec -ember 1821, while West Virginia was a part of the State of Virginia.

It was formed from parts of Bath, Pendleton , and Randolph Counties , and that time was supposed to contain 820 square miles.

The boundry lines of Pocahontas County as origionally established by the Virginia Legislature in December 1821 are as follows .

Beginning at the line of Greenbrier County on top of the Allegheny Mountain Thence with the said line to the head of Spice Run, thence with the said line to the end of the Droop Mountain, thence with said line to Fryers Knob, thence with said line to where it intersects the line of Bath and Randolph, thence with the line dividing Randolph and Greenbrier Counties , to the mountain opposite the junction of the Bannock Shoal Run with Williams River, thence a straight line to the mouth of the dry fork of ElkRiver, Thence a straight line to the top of the mountain between the head of the Valley River, and the point last aforesaid, where the road leading from Clover Lick to Randolph courthouse, crosses said mountain , thence a straight line to where the line of Pendleton County intersects the line of Bath and Randolph Counties on top of the mountain